

Newfields Elementary School Deliberative Session Minutes February 7, 2012

Moderator: John Hayden

Town Clerk: Sue McKinnon

Attendance: School Board Member James McIlroy, Michael Price, Kirsten Lord, NES Principal Helen Rist and Esther Asbell, Assistant Superintendant.

Moderator John Hayden called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm and called for the pledge of allegiance. He introduced the head table and briefly explained that the purpose of the meeting was to review, discuss and amend the school warrant articles as proposed.

The Moderator read Article 1.

1. Shall the School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$2,096,159.17? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$2,092,940, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the District or by law or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only.

The School Board recommends \$2,096,159.17 as set forth on said budget.

The Budget Advisory Committee recommends \$2,096,159.17 as set forth on said budget.

School Board Chair James McIlroy stated that the budget was reviewed in detail at the budget hearing in January. This year the teaching staff has been reduced by one. A couple of items that have increased are utilities and retirement. There has been a significant increase in the water and sewer payments and for oil and propane. The retirement contributions have gone up significantly. The State is shifting the cost of retirement back onto the municipalities. Also, the new SAU business administration has a different formulae for budgeting salaries so some adjustments are reflected in appropriate line items.

He commented that Principal Helen Rist has done a great job, in her second year, keeping the budget level while still meeting the schools needs. There are no changes in staff expected in the upcoming year.

Selectman Hayward mentioned that the summer program has limited hours and he questioned whether or not there was enough money appropriated for it. According to Helen there is enough money in the program; the reason for the level of hours has never been a monetary issue.

Christine Sununu asked how the cost of the summer program can be accurate if the numbers of children aren't identified until April.

Esther responded that they have to guesstimate the number of children based on the current level of needs. It is hard to predict how many students need special education. Not all students that receive special education attend the summer program. James McIlroy added that money may be taken from another line item for special education, if necessary.

Nancy Mason asked the average class size. Helen said the average class size is 14 students, which is below the state average. James added that we have been lucky that the population has been largely either large or small fitting into a single or double class size per grade.

With no further discussion, Article 1 shall be placed on the ballot as written.

The Moderator read Article 2.

2. Shall the School District vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Newfields School Board and the Newfields Paraprofessional Association covering the three year period from September 1, 2012 to August 31, 2015 which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels:

Year	Estimated Increase
2012-2013	\$ 5,230
2013-2014	\$ 4,288
2014-2015	\$ 4,374

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,230 for the 2012-2013 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those of the appropriation at current staffing levels paid in the prior fiscal year?

The School Board recommends the approval of this warrant article.

James stated that the proposed contract is three years with raises of 2.5%, 2.0%, and 2.0% each year respectively for the paraprofessionals. This staff is making between \$12.00 and \$14.00 per hour and we are very fortunate that most of them are certified with degrees. Many of them work with the special needs children. There was no discussion. Article 2 shall be placed on the ballot as written.

The Moderator read Article 3.

3. Shall the School District raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 to be added to the School Building Maintenance Fund established at the 1992 School District meeting for the purpose of repairing and maintaining school buildings?

The School Board recommends this appropriation.

James stated that the current balance of the account is \$12,000. The heating unit on the building is on the list to be replaced. Last year it was found to be leaking and it consistently breaks down and needs maintenance. This is a high cost purchase item which they may be able to purchase in the next couple of years. Classroom painting is on this year's agenda.

The maintenance fund has been used for quite a few projects and is needed for unexpected facilities expenses. Recent facilities projects include replacing windows, doors, a new security system, new phone system, an air conditioning unit, and rewiring of the entire building. Many of these items were funded, or partially funded, by grants. These are always used if possible before the Maintenance fund.

Article 3 shall be placed on the ballot as written.

Article 4. To hear reports of agents and committees or officers heretofore chosen.

Mike Price announced that James McIlroy will be running for a second three year term as School Board Member.

Article 5. To transact any other business which may legally come before the meeting.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 7:26pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue McKinnon
Newfields Town Clerk